A REVIEW

OF

THE REVIEW OF A NEW PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF

MR. JONES'S LIFE

OF

BISHOP HORNE,

In the BRITISH CRITIC, for FEBRUARY, 1800.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

BY A. I. N.

THE SECOND EDITION,

TO WHICH IS ADDED A POSTSCRIPT.

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M.DCCC.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

ON a supposition that the following Review, received from a Friend, would not be an agreeable present to the British Critic; *that it might be indelicate to offer it to the* Anti-Jacobin; *and, having no wish to encourage the* Monthly or Critical Review, *I have determined to let it take its chance by itself.*

A REVIEW

OF THE

NEW REVIEW OF A PREFACE, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IF you still take in the *British Critic*, which, perhaps, you do, though you have long complained of it, you have probably read the Review of a new Preface to the second edition of Bishop Horne's Life, by Mr. Jones; and, if you have, I think you will not be displeased, from the exceptionable manner in which it is done, to see a few animadversions on it. To begin then without farther ceremony.

"This, which (says the Reviewer) may be con-
"sidered as the *cycnea cantio* of the excellent au-
"thor, bears date July 30th, 1799."—A pretty compliment to be sure, and a pretty introduction to what follows! We shall find it to be something

like giving a dog roast meat, and basting him with the spit: except, indeed, that a compliment, even from the British Critic, is not so good as roast meat. But why is this Preface to be considered as the *cycnea cantio?* The author of THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY was not idle from July 30th, 1799, to January 6th, 1800; the day he entered into his rest. He laboured to the last; and, if the Reviewer will only look into the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, for January and February, he will see two admirable *Letters*, addressed *to a Predestinarian*, by *Philalethes*, the proper signature of Mr. Jones.

"The purport of the Preface (we are told) is "to maintain his favourite analogy of the Holy "Trinity against the reflections of the writer of "that Life of the Bishop, which is mentioned in "the title-page." But is that the *only* purport of it? In the title-page the new Preface is said to be *on certain interesting points in Theology and Philosophy*; and, by referring to it, you will see an enumeration of twelve particulars, to shew what the principles really are, which are called *Hutchinsonian*,

sanian, and to satisfy those (as the author observes) who, having heard some things to perplex them, would be glad of better information. Is this, then, on the part of the British Critic, a fair, candid, and impartial state of the case; or has it any pretence to be called *a Review*, when eleven articles out of twelve are entirely suppressed? Not to mention that the defence of Bishop Horne, against the reflections of the *Life-writer* in the New Biographical Dictionary, is wholly passed over in silence. Not a word is said of what is urged in support of his mode of interpreting Scripture, to shew that he trod in the steps of those who went before him; the analogy, he proceeded on, being admitted and insisted upon, as plain and certain by the best Divines of the Christian Church, because they found it in the word of God. It is required in Stewards, that a man be found faithful: but with *Critics*, some at least, literary stewards for the public, it should seem, it is *not* required.

" That the operation of light and air may be safe-
" ly used by way of illustration in speaking of that
" high subject (he admits) no serious Christian

 " will

" will deny."—A convenient qualifying salvo, to be applied as occasion offers! "But (continues he) " the *Hutchinsonian* doctrine, which Mr. Jones sup- " ported in this point, appears to go much farther; " and, if so, may surely be censured as fanciful and " even presumptuous."—*Appears to go much farther; and if so!*—whatever else may appear, this appears evident enough; that either the gentleman does not know any thing of the subject himself, or is not willing that his readers should. One can hardly suppose it possible for a man to read the New Preface to Bishop Horne's Life, and not see *how* far the Hutchinsonian doctrine went; for Mr. Jones was never reckoned an *obscure* writer: but there are eyes which see not; and, it is observed, none are so blind as those who will not see. Whether it be owing to ignorance, or prejudice, or partiality for the writer of Bishop Horne's Life, in the New Biographical Dictionary, as a second self, *alter et idem*; or to pique for the correction he deservedly received at the hands of Mr. Jones; the fact is, this article is miserably slurred over by the *British Critic*, and without the shadow of an argument in his support; we have only his vain surmises, " that " surely Mr. Jones may be censured as fanciful, and

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" even presumptuous." There was a master of Israel formerly, who thought some things *fanciful* when proposed to him; and asked, *How can these things be?* So there may be a master of Israel now, a stranger to some things which he ought to know, and disposed to say, as Nicodemus did, *How can these things be?* Though why it should be thought a thing incredible, that God, who made the world, should have so made it as to enable us to see the *spiritual* in the *natural* world, I do not comprehend. Nay, we are expressly told, *that the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and* GODHEAD. Now, if the Godhead is to be *understood by the things that are made*, and the Godhead is a Trinity in Unity, then may not the *Heavens, the things that are made*, which the electrical experiments shew to be a Trinity in Unity, be the appointed instruments to *declare the glory of God;* and may not what is contemptuously called the *Hutchinsonian* doctrine, which makes all nature bear witness to the truth of Revelation, be the true doctrine; and the censure of *fanciful* and *presumptuous*, which

which the Reviewer has prepared for others, deservedly fall on his own pate?

However, the gentleman has an authority in his favour, such as it is, which he is willing to make the most of; and, from the triumphant manner of introducing it, one should imagine he thought it decisive. "We shall rest at present," says he, "on an authority, which Mr. Jones himself mentions, of his own tutor at University College, whose opinion on an Hutchinsonian Tract was thus expressed; "There were some good things, and some curious "things in it; but the man raves, when he talks of his "*fire, light*, and *spirit*. p. 14. Exactly so think "we."—It is observed of Bishop Burnet, with one exception only, that, whenever he gives any man a good character, he always concludes with a *but*, that mars the whole. After the example of his Lordship, the *British Critic* too has his *but*. The *excellent author*, whom he introduced with a compliment, proves, in the sequel, to be *fanciful* and *even presumptuous*; the *cycnea cantio* is no better than a delirium, a sick man's dream; and the poor dying swan,

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in his last moments, *raves*. The man *raves* when he talks of his *fire*, *light*, and *spirit*, says the *tutor*—exactly so, think we, says the *British Critic*. And, if he think so, so it must be: wisdom will die with him. But I hope not. It is a pity there was not *more* quoted from the page referred to: but there might be reasons why not; and the passage curtailed might suit the Reviewer's purpose better than if given more at length. As it *now* stands, it seems sanctioned, as it were, by Mr. Jones himself; but *then* it would have a very different aspect. But, to my mind, there is something so pertinent in what is omitted, that I cannot resist transcribing it, and I flatter myself you will be of the same opinion. "Now "herein is to me a marvellous thing," says Mr. Jones, in his observation on the tutor's remark, "that learn-"ing, seated in the chair of Alfred (or, let me add, "in the chair of the *British Critic*) should take this "doctrine of *fire*, *light*, and *air*, to be raving; "when ignorance, with a tallow candle in its hand, "need only light it, to see them all at work toge-"ther. Air enters at the bottom, where the flame "looks blue; fire and smoke from the snuff are at "the top; and the brightest light is about the mid-

"dle.

" dle. No man can draw a line between them, or " say where one ends and another begins. But here " they are certainly; for without air the candle goes " out; without fire it will not burn us, and without " light we shall not see by it. And all this is no " theory, but a plain undeniable matter of fact. " How wonderful, that a philosopher cannot see this, " when a child or a ploughman may be made to un- " derstand it! Two strange events of the same kind " are more credible than one. The people among " the Jews, who *knew* most, were those who could " see least."

" Without the smallest diminution of our truly " cordial respect for the late Mr. Jones, whose fa- " vourite dogma this was; and who never pardoned " our acknowlegement of the same sentiment in re- " viewing his tract upon that subject"—What a consolation to the friends of Mr. Jones! How kind and gracious in the British Critic to speak so handsomely! Though I have my doubts. For, if you turn a dog out of doors into the street, and cry a mad dog, the poor animal will stand a bad chance for his life, however cordial your respect may be for him. But is

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the charge well founded, (it is a heavy one!) that their acknowlegement of their sentiment in reviewing his tract on his favourite dogma (as it is called) was an offence never pardoned by him? I trow not. The subject is an important one; and Mr. Jones thought, as he well might, that it would be fairly represented, especially in a Review, that professed to have the investigation of truth for its object. Instead of which, this tract, of *a Short Way to Truth*, is treated with an air of unconcern, as a thing of no moment; and the British Critic, in the chair, authoritatively declares, *though we do not, in all points, accede to the opinions of this author, we can fairly give our general testimony to his good sense and good intentions.* Of this, Mr. Jones took notice in a Letter to the Editor of the British Critic, for October, 1793; and of that Letter the Editor takes no notice in the British Critic, for February, 1800; owing, we will suppose, entirely to forgetfulness. Had it been referred to, which it should have been, when speaking of the Critique, I am satisfied it would have shewn there was no warrant for the epithet of *unforgiving* applied to Mr. Jones; and yet, I apprehend, it was from some confused remembrance of such a Letter that the charge was made; for I am persuaded there was no other ground

to go upon. As possibly you have never seen the Letter, I think I cannot do better than transcribe it.

(No. 5.)

THE TRINITARIAN ANALOGY.

In a Letter to the Editor of the British Critic, for October 1793.

Sir,

THE nature and design of the Trinitarian Analogy, as it hath been stated in the four preceding Numbers, is such, that it may be supposed to have come from some person, who covets no praise, and fears no censure. You have allowed him the merit of a little *good sense;* to which, however, in my opinion, he has but a doubtful title. For, if this great argument, so plainly founded on divine Revelation, and supported by evidence, old and new, from every quarter, is so slightly noticed, and thrown aside as a trifle, by persons in whom the world expects to find superior learning, and from whom writers, on the Christian side, have hoped for that candour and justice which they have hitherto not met with from others; it must surely have been an act of indiscretion to trust it with the public, such as *good sense* would not easily have fallen into. Give me leave, therefore, to explain how this happened.

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The incident, which gave occasion to the composing of these papers, is truly related in the Preface. The publication of them was not at first intended. But a late learned and excellent person, who was not only a strenuous defender of the Christian cause, but a great ornament to the Christian society, was heard to say, that, if such a man as *Dr. Priestley* was ever to be converted to the belief of Christianity, nothing would be so likely, in his opinion, to produce that effect, as a sight of that alliance between natural and divine Truth, which Revelation hath pointed out to us; meaning that very Alliance, or Analogy, in particular, which hath here been traced with so much care and attention. Of this, when it first occurred to him, he wrote the following memorable words: "I "have found information enough to give me an idea "of the spiritual agency of the Divine Persons in the "redemption of mankind; an idea, which I could "never have expected, or thought it possible for "man in the body to have; and which hath fixed "me fast to the rock of my salvation, by an anchor "of the soul, both sure and steadfast, never more to "be tossed about upon the waves of scepticism or "infidelity."

The author, therefore, could not think it quite improbable, that with persons of fewer prejudices, and better inclinations, the sight of such a thing might possibly be productive of some good effect; with which hope he ventured to send it abroad. For if it be once admitted, that nature affords a visible testimony to the mysteries of Christianity, as is here demonstrated, the dispute with Philosophers is at an end; and, for the most distant prospect of so desirable an event, I would, at any time, hazard my reputation.

In the first paper, I have contended, according to the established opinion, which is undoubtedly right, that the doctrine of the Trinity ought to be believed upon the *testimony of God*; but if men call out for a *similitude of truth* in what is *known*, before they will receive what is *unknown*, to human reason, we are then ready to meet them upon their own ground. I do therefore wish that you had shewed your readers, in as few words as possible, *what* the argument is, what is the *design* of it, and to what sort of *persons* it is more particularly addressed, as an *argumentum ad homines*; which, if it should not succeed so often as it might be wished and expected, no harm is done.

All

All the common arguments remain, and may serve to keep plain Christians in the way of truth, as they have done hitherto; and, as to those philosophers, who are unhappily disaffected to it, we mustleave them to go on in their own way, producing a new crop of hard words every year, till they shall be brought to a better understanding of *things*: and then they will do as much good, as they are now disposed to do mischief. For, suppose twenty persons to be persuaded, in the ordinary way of reasoning, that Christianity is *not false*; one single man, who is brought over to love and admire the *wisdom* of it, will, probably, be worth them all: and I look upon *this* as the certain effect of my argument, where it has any effect at all.

Soon after the papers, which contain it, were printed off, it was reported, that a copy of them had been handed, without the author's consent or knowlege, to *Dr. Priestley*: with what success he never heard. But what that learned gentleman published, soon afterwards, in his address to his friends, the French philosophers, who are extirpating Christianity as fast as they can, leaves us utterly without hope that any good effect is to be expected from that or any other application

cation of the kind. Many years ago, that excellent Controversalist, *Mr. Charles Leslie*, published his *Short Method with the Deists*; originally composed for the private benefit of the Duke of *Leeds*; the design of which was to give a demonstration of the *facts* of Christianity. For, argued he, no man can possibly deny the *doctrines*, if he admits the *facts* by which those doctrines were first proved to the world. But, in Dr. Priestley, we see a melancholy example of what *Mr. Leslie* thought impossible; he having actually borrowed (or stolen) that author's singular demonstration of the facts of Christianity, without any mention of his name (of which you should have given your readers some notice) while he denies the doctrines which those facts were intended to prove. *Mahomet* did the same, as the learned *Mr. Bryant* hath, of late, very well observed. This impostor allowed so many of the facts, that he ought to have taken the doctrines with them; but, like our philosophical Doctor, he denied them all, and published a new set of his own manufacture. *Mahomet*'s view was to raise a party against the Christian world; and the Doctor makes no secret of it, that he is actuated by a like spirit of proselyting. While such a person is so busy

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in working upon others, nothing can be done upon himself; and I am one of those who always considered his case, as a hopeless one. I have watched the ways of mankind very attentively; and I find they reject many things, not because they doubt of them, or conceive them to be false, but because they do not *like* them. *Judas* always knew that his Master was the true Messiah; he only discovered, that he was not such a Messiah as would do for *him*. The philosophical leaders in France are not so bereaved of their wits, as to disbelieve the being of a God; they have only discovered, that anarchy, murder, and sacrilege, will not consist with the worship of him, so they cast him off, till he shall cast off them; which will happen in its time, as it did to the Jews.

I think it highly proper, that, in a popular undertaking as yours is, all appearance of singularity in judgment should be avoided, and the temper of the age submitted to, so far as it may be done, without any mean arts of adulation on the one hand, or suppression on the other; for which your enemies would hold you cheap, and your best friends would be afraid of you. Every sincere reformer of the times, in which he lives,

must

must consider himself as a physician to squeamish patients, who will touch no medicine unless it is palatable or fashionable; he must do good to the world against its will; and persevere, as well as he can, under the honest encouragement of the sanguine, the cold approbation of the prudent, the contempt of adversaries, and the silence of many who think rightly, but are afraid to speak. That you may always be mindful of those reasonable expectations with which the friends of this Church and Government, at a very critical time, have given you such ample encouragement, is the hearty wish of

Your constant Reader, and
humble Servant,

The Author of the Short Way to Truth.

Nov. 20, 1793.

When you have read the foregoing letter, I have a notion you will think it hardly credible it could be forgotten by the editor, as I was willing to suppose; and, if remembered, you may wonder how it could be remembered to so little purpose. Incorrigible, as it

it were, he goes on reviewing in the same flimsy way as before, notwithstanding the useful hints given for doing it to better effect: and, when you consider the perverse, malevolent interpretation put on the gentle reproofs and friendly admonitions of the Letter-writer, by the Editor, you will be reminded of the Apostle's question to the Galatians, *Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?*

By this early offence (that is, of not doing what they ought to have done) we forfeited (say they) the expectation of his (Mr. Jones's) support and assistance. I do not know what the gentleman's expectations might be; but, methinks, Mr. Jones did pretty well for them. By his zeal and exertion the Society for Reformation of Principles was set on foot: he made a collection of excellent tracts, published under the title of *the Scholar armed*, in two volumes, for the use of students in divinity; (which, by the by, have not been recommended as they deserved) and he was the means of *establishing the British Critic*; of which the Editor and his friends are now reaping the profits. If Mr. Jones's other avocations had left him leisure to give farther assistance to the British Critic, it would

 have

have added much to the credit of the work; but it certainly had no claim upon him. With the care of a parish, to which he was indeed a blessing; with attention to his pupils, whom he was anxious to send forth into the world, from under his instruction, well rooted and grounded in sound principles; and with his private literary studies, which had ever the glory of God for their object; his time was fully employed; and he might surely be excused from contributing to the support of the Review by his labours, without the *uncharitable* insinuation of having *resentment* for his motive.

So much for the British Critic.—We have weighed him in the balance; and I believe you will allow he is found wanting:—wanting in justice to the author whom he reviewed, by supposing he was *beside himself* (as Festus did Paul) when he was *speaking forth the words of truth and soberness*;—wanting in justice to his readers, by pretending to give them the *Review* of a work, and concealing from them the greatest part of it; as the chief Priests, with a view to stifle evidence, consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;—and wanting in argument; for he produces

none;

none; having recourse to bare assertion and his *ipse dixit*, instead of it, and substituting railing for reason. If he had indulged his readers with a fair account of the tract, instead of representing it as not worth notice, it might have induced them to look into the tract itself, and then many of them might have been heard to say, what a gentleman *did* say, into whose hands it was put, "If *this* be *Hutchinsonian-* "*ism*, it is only another name for *Christianity in* "*perfection.*" But I trust Mr. Jones's character, as an author, is too well established for any work with *his* name to it to be disregarded, because some Critics speak evil of those things which they know not; and any tract of his, relating to *interesting points in philosophy and theology*, will engage the attention of the learned and pious, however lightly treated by others.

Regard for an old friend, no longer able to speak for himself—for whom you likewise had a great regard—induced me to make these animadversions; not doubting they would be acceptable to you, as a free-will offering of a grateful heart. If you think the Letter will be useful to others, and afford them any satisfaction, you are at liberty to print it. If it should serve

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to convince the Reviewers of their error, and lead them to acknowlege, with Joseph's brethren, *we are verily guilty concerning our brother*, the end will be answered; for their amendment, not their disgrace, is the object.

I am, with great respect,

your faithful and obliged

A. I. N.

A few

A few Words by way of POSTSCRIPT.

P. S. Contrary to my expectations, the Authors of the British Critic have taken notice of your Correspondent A. I. N. in their review for *April.* I thought they would prudently have passed him over in silence; but they *could* not; their evil genius would not let them. Instead of proving themselves wiser to-day than they were yesterday (which they had an opportunity of doing, by candidly confessing they had been in the wrong) they adopt a notion, that wrong, persisted in, becomes right; and so they pursue their old course. Their motto is not, *Let the galled jade go wince, our withers are unwrung;* for they feel plaguy sore. If you throw a stone at a dog and he yelps, you may guess you have hit him.

"Mr. Jones (they say) had several friends of less "genius and judgment than himself, who blindly "deemed him infallible. In that number" (i. e. of less genius and judgment than himself) "we could not arrange ourselves." Modest gentlemen, indeed!

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Be not wise in your own conceits: he that exalteth himself shall be abased. Mr Jones's FRIENDS, not so high minded, were ever ready to bow to his *superior* genius and judgment; and, without "blindly "deeming him infallible," they certainly think, that, take him for all in all, they "ne'er shall look upon his "like again."

The Reviewers allow (reluctantly enough, God knows) "that he belonged to, perhaps formed, (why *perhaps?* when they know he *actually did* form) "the "society, which first proposed the plan of such a re-"view." No, pardon me gentlemen, *dele* SUCH—if you please—he proposed the plan of a Review, but not *such* a Review as the British Critic has turned out. His Review was one, in which the temper of the age was to be submitted to, so far as it might be done, without any mean arts of adulation on the one hand, or *suppression* on the other. These worthy wights have very treacherous memories; they continually stand in need of a flapper.

"But the Review (say they) might have perished "a thousand times" (once would have been enough) "before

"before he, or many of his admiring friends, would have "written a single line to support it:" (and, if they had there was no security for its not being garbled and spoiled in the passage by their *ars critica*) "and, the "moment we appeared not to adopt all his opinions, "he and they complained of it."—Complained of *it!* complained of *what?* Not that the Reviewers did not adopt all his opinions, which is a gross misrepresentation, but that they did not, in their inquisitorial capacity, lay the opinions fairly before their readers, and leave them to judge for themselves. But why are the critics so peevish; why so fretful, as they seem to be? Mr. Jones's "many admiring friends" "bear no malice nor hatred in their hearts:" they are ready to return good for evil, and would be happy to provoke the gentlemen to good works and a better understanding of things. No man, to be sure, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and the British Critic is very right in so doing; but, if his candle burn dim, (which it is very apt to do) or there be a thief in it, why should he be angry with a friend for snuffing it, that it may give more light? Or, having put his own candle on a candle-

a candlestick, why should he be so anxious to put Mr. Jones's under a bushel?

"The present tract (they observe) may be con-
"sidered as a specimen of the kind of publication which
"those friends would have produced by themselves."
What a home thrust! There we have him, says the British Critic, under the fifth rib. But should they not have given some specimen of the tract, that their readers might have known a little, what kind of a thing it was?

"Its attack upon us turns chiefly upon this (which, take my word for it, gentle reader, it does not) "that "we did not enter into a detail and disputation, which "we thought, and still think, unnecessary:"—that is, in other words, they are wise enough to know what they wish to conceal from vulgar eyes; that they are mainly ignorant of the subject, and that truth is not to be spoken at all times.

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